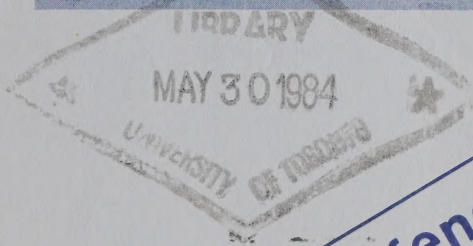


VORP

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Victim / Offender
Reconciliation
Program

Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program

Victims of crime, who once held an invisible role in the criminal justice system, now participate in and benefit from programs for the rehabilitation of offenders offered by the Ministry of Correctional Services.

One such program, the Victim/Offender Reconciliation Program (VORP) run by community agencies for the ministry, brings the victim and offender together through a volunteer mediator. As the third party at the meeting, the volunteer monitors the meeting to ensure both the victim and offender are satisfied with the contract they have negotiated.

The first case of victim/offender reconciliation was a success for the Kitchener probation and parole services office in 1974. Two young men convicted of 22 charges of willful damage in Elmira, Ontario, were ordered by the court to meet all of their victims and arrange to compensate each one.

Today, VORP is offered in 15 locations in Ontario. Although the program may be administered differently from one area to another, there are three common guidelines:

- The crime must be property offence
- The offender must have no history of violence nor can the offence involve violence
- The victim must be an identifiable individual and the offence must involve a small family-type business or a private residence.

Previously, victims were left with many unanswered questions about the crimes against

them. At the mediated VORP meetings, victims can ask offenders about their criminal actions and can express feelings of resentment. Many victims find participating in VORP reduces their sense of anxiety about the crime.

Victims may also be either fully or partially compensated through VORP after negotiating a settlement with the offender. VORP provides the opportunity to satisfy the needs of both parties and personalizes the justice process at the same time.

For more information about the role of the victim in programs run by the Ministry of Correctional Services, contact:

Probation and Parole Services Branch
Ministry of Correctional Services
2001 Eglinton Avenue East
Scarborough, Ontario
M1L 4P1

Telephone: (416)750-3440



Ontario

Ministry of
Correctional
Services

Honourable Nicholas G. Leluk
Minister
George R. Podrebarac
Deputy Minister

First Printing: March, 1984